CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for time-stamping a document comprising:

a. receiving identifying data associated with a document D at an outside agency;

b. creating at said outside agency a first receipt based on said identifying data ~~and a linking value~~;

c. creating at said outside agency a second receipt based on ~~said linking value and~~ a time indication;

d. inserting a linking value into said first and second receipts that links the identifying data in the first receipt with the time indication in the second receipt;

e. certifying said first and second receipts at said outside agency using a cryptographic signature scheme.

2. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 1 wherein said identifying data comprises a digital representation of at least a portion of said document.

3. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 2 wherein said identifying data comprises a digital sequence derived by application of a deterministic function to at least a portion of said document.

4. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 3 wherein said digital sequence is a hash value derived by application of a one-way hashing function to at least a portion of said document.

5. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 1 wherein said first receipt includes at least a portion of said identifying data and a nonce.

6. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 1 wherein said first receipt includes a digital sequence generated by applying a pre-determined function to said identifying data.

7. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 1 wherein one of said first and second receipts includes a user identification number associated with a user.

8. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 7 wherein one of said first and second receipts includes a sequential record number.

9. (Currently amended) A method for time-stamping a document comprising:

a. transmitting identifying data associated with said document to an outside agency;

b. receiving from said outside agency a first receipt signed by said outside agency using a cryptographic signature scheme, said first receipt including a first digital sequence generated based on said identifying data ~~and a linking value~~; ~~and~~

c. receiving from said outside agency a second receipt signed by said outside agency using a cryptographic signature scheme, said second receipt containing a second digital sequence based on a time indication ~~and said linking value.~~; and

d. wherein said first and second receipts include a linking value that links the identifying data in the first receipt with said time indication in the second receipt.

10. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein said identifying data comprises a digital representation of at least a portion of said document.

11. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 10 wherein said identifying data comprises a digital sequence derived by application of a deterministic function to at least a portion of said document.

12. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 11 wherein said digital sequence is a hash value derived by application of a one-way hashing function to at least a portion of said document.

13. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein said first receipt includes at least a portion of said identifying data and a nonce.

14. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein said first receipt includes a digital sequence generated by applying a pre-determined function to said identifying data.

15. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein one of said first and second receipts includes a user identification number associated with a user.

16. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 15 wherein one of said first and second receipts includes a sequential record number.

17. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein a common cryptographic signature scheme is used to sign both said first and second receipts.

18. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein different cryptographic signature schemes are used to sign said first and second receipts.

19. (Original) The time-stamping method of claim 9 wherein said linking value is a nonce value.